


Westhoughton
Urban District Council.

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Annual Report
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
AND THE
Sanitary Inspector.

Year ending December 31st, 1920.



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Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Westhoughton
Urban District Council.*

❧

GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting my ANNUAL REPORT on the conditions concerning the Public Health and Sanitation of the District.

The area of the District is 5,554 acres, containing 19 miles of highway.

The geological formation is boulder clay over coal measures.

The population at the Census of 1911 was 15,046, and the Registrar-General's estimated population at end of 1920 is 15,781.

The chief industry of the District is colliery working. In addition there are two fairly large spinning mills and a number of cotton weaving and manufacturing concerns, while a calico printing works and rope manufactory provide employment for a number of people. Consequently, in normal times the District is prosperous, and there is comparatively little poverty.

Recreation grounds and a public park are provided, but there is great need of open playing fields for the young people.

The general health during 1920 was satisfactory. The birth-rate, death-rate and infectious returns show improvement on recent years, while the infantile death-rate although still high shows an improvement of 15 per cent. compared with the average figures of the last 10 years.

The local District Nursing Association and Care Committee for Tuberculous sufferers carry on excellent work, and although the Township is not provided with a hospital there is facility for admission to the leading hospitals of Manchester, Bolton and Wigan.

A notable event during the year was the purchasing of a desirable central residence to be equipped as a Child Welfare Centre and School Clinic and handed over to the Council as a War Memorial. The Lancashire County Council have agreed to provide the staff for the School Clinic, and this will include treatment for dental and eye defects during school age.

In common with most districts, when the Great War ended it was soon apparent that a marked shortage of houses existed. Overcrowding was discovered by a census of the District, and the Council decided on the erection of a number of houses, some of which are now occupied.

Another marked advance has been made by the linking up of the Township with the neighbouring towns of Bolton and Wigan by means of a motor bus service.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Birth-rate.</i>	<i>Death-rate.</i>	<i>Epidemic Death-rate.</i>	<i>Phthisis Death-rate.</i>	<i>Respir'y Death-rate.</i>	<i>Rate of Deaths under 1 year to 1000 Births.</i>
1920	23·4	11·1	0·57	0·38	2·28	91
1919	20·9	12·6	0·39	0·39	2·5	99
Mean of 10 years 1910-1919 ...	24·0	14·0	1·54	0·61	3·3	120
Increase or De- crease in 1920 on prev. year...	+ 2·5	—1·5	+ 0·18	—0·01	—0·22	— 8
Ten years Aver....	—0·6	—2·9	—0·97	—0·23	—1·02	—29

BIRTHS.

The number of births registered during the year was 370. Of these, 201 were males and 169 females. This is equal to a birth-rate of 23·4 compared with 20·9 last year. The birth-rate for England and Wales during the same period was 25·4.

There were 17 illegitimate births.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Total Births.</i>	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>Birth-rate.</i>	<i>County Urban Birth-rate.</i>	<i>England and Wales.</i>
1920...	370	201	169	23·4	...	25·4
1919...	336	180	156	20·9	16·58	18·5
1918...	284	138	146	19·2	16·09	17·7
1917...	290	160	130	18·8	16·27	17·8
1916...	344	187	157	22·3	18·54	21·6

DEATHS.

During the year there were registered 176 deaths, equal to a death-rate of 11·1 as against a rate of 12·6 last year. The death-rate for England and Wales was 12·4.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Deaths under 1 year.</i>	<i>Total Deaths.</i>	<i>Death-rate.</i>	<i>County Urban Death-rate.</i>	<i>England and Wales.</i>
1920.....	34	176	11·1	...	12·4
1919.....	29	192	12·6	14·01	13·8
1918.....	28	219	15·7	17·4	13·8
1917.....	30	156	10·1	14·05	14·4
1916.....	37	194	12·5	14·47	14·0

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The number of deaths which occurred during the first year of life during 1920 was 34, and this is equal to a rate of 91 as against 99 last year, and a 10 years' average of 120 per 1,000 births.

The deaths may be sub-divided into the following groups :

<i>Under 1 week.</i>	<i>Between 1 week and 1 month.</i>	<i>Between 1 month and 6 months.</i>	<i>Between 6 months and 12 months.</i>
7	10	9	8

The certified cause of the 34 infantile deaths is as follows :

Premature Births and Debility	18
(12 males and 6 females)	
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	6
Diarrhoea	3
Convulsions	3
Malformations	3
Other Causes	2

RATE OF DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR PER 1,000 BIRTHS.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Westhoughton.</i>	<i>County Urban.</i>	<i>England and Wales.</i>
Average 10 years :			
1910-1919.....	120	113	102
1920	91	...	...
1919	99	93	89
1918	91	101	97
1917	103	96	97
1916	107	101	91

MATERNITY & CHILD WELFARE.

Excellent progress has been made with the Scheme for Maternity and Child Welfare.

There is evidence that the work of the Health Visitors is appreciated by the mothers, who welcome the advice given on the visits to the homes—especially does this apply to the younger mothers.

The Centre has been well attended and the premises now occupied at the Town Hall are totally inadequate. Mothers are frequently disappointed on finding the waiting room crowded, and consequently the attendance is limited—a distinct handicap to the progress of the scheme. We are all looking forward to the time when the War Memorial premises can be utilised for the Centre purposes.

During the autumn the Travelling Exhibition paid a visit to the District, and the result was highly successful. Large numbers of adults visited the exhibition, and special arrangements were made for lectures and demonstrations for school children who attended with their teachers.

The associated organising work also secured for our general scheme the interest of a number of voluntary helpers with whom we had previously been unable to get in touch.

Routine work has been efficiently carried out by the Health Visitors, who undertake daily visiting and keep a diary, thus enabling cases to be discussed with the Medical Officer.

Interest is maintained until children reach school age. Up to three years of age regular and systematic visiting is carried out. From three to five years the visiting is more casual, except under special circumstances.

Record is kept of particulars of each visit, and card when completed at school age is available for use of School Medical Service.

Health Visitors frequently consult the local Midwives and this leads to mutual advantages. By this means information is often obtained regarding expectant mothers, and it is by increasing the interest of the Midwives that this side of the work can be developed.

Arrangements exist with several hospitals for the admission and treatment of cases from the District, viz.: Bolton Infirmary Maternity Home, St. Mary's Hospital and Children's Hospital, Manchester.

Distribution of food and milk is carried out after investigation, in necessitous cases.

The sale of dried milk and "Virol" has been successful, and is appreciated by the mothers.

During the summer an outbreak of Measles occurred in the Chequerbent, Daisy Hill, and Central Districts, and I found it advisable to withdraw one of the Nurses from her usual work and utilise her services in connection with investigations carried out to trace origin and prevent the spread of the disease.

Definite particulars were obtained regarding each case notified to the School Authorities with whom we co-operated and early medical advice was urged in some of the more serious cases.

I found it necessary to advise closure of the affected schools for a time.

Two cases of Puerperal Fever were notified, and unfortunately both proved fatal.

Two cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum were notified, and in each both eyes were affected. Both cases made satisfactory recovery. In each case one of the Nurses paid several visits each day, acting in co-operation with the doctor in attendance.

The following is a brief summary of the work carried out during the year, with certain particulars:—

(a) Total births registered	...	...	...	...	370
(b) Total births notified	...	...	...	...	386
(c) Birth enquiries	...	...	...	...	390
(d) Re-visits to births under 1 year	...	...	...	...	4855
(e) ,, over 1 year	...	...	...	...	1671
(f) Visits to expectant mothers	...	...	...	...	169
(g) Breast-fed babies	...	...	...	...	322
(h) Bottle-fed babies	...	...	...	...	126
(i) Babies still-born	...	...	...	...	14
(j) Total deaths under 1 year	...	...	...	...	34

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

During the year excellent work was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector and Health Visitors in their respective departments.

Hospital accommodation is provided for infectious diseases, viz.: Scarlet Fever, Enteric Fever, and Diphtheria, at the Joint District Hospital. During 1920 the following cases were admitted :—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	22 cases with 1 death.
Enteric Fever	...	...	5 „ 1 death.
Diphtheria	...	...	4 „ no deaths.

Smallpox Hospital at Roger's Farm is always available for admission of patients, but no cases were notified during the year.

Arrangements exist for chemical and bacteriological work, which is carried out by Professor Delepine of Manchester University.

During the year water was examined, with satisfactory result.

Four specimens of Sputum were sent for examination by local medical men. One sample was reported as "positive" as regards presence of tubercle bacilli; the others being "negative."

ZYMOTIC DISEASE.

There were notified 72 cases of infectious diseases, including 22 cases of Pneumonia, compared with 77 last year.

1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	Average.
72	77	417	236	243	209

SCARLET FEVER.

There were notified 30 cases of this disease; 22 cases were removed to hospital. There was 1 death.

DIPHTHERIA.

Five cases were notified during the year, of which 4 were removed to hospital. There were no deaths.

ENTERIC FEVER.

Six cases of this disease occurred, and 5 were removed to hospital. One case ended fatally.

DIARRHŒA.

During the year 6 deaths were certified as due to Diarrhœa.

RESPIRATORY DISEASE.

Thirty-six deaths were due to Respiratory Diseases as against 40 last year. The death-rate from these diseases is 2·2.

Fifteen deaths were due to Pneumonia. Bronchitis accounting for 18.

INFLUENZA.

The District was free from Epidemic Influenza, but during the year 9 deaths were certified as due to this disease and associated complications.

PHTHISIS.

During the year there were notified 16 cases of this disease as against 7 last year. There were 6 deaths due to the disease. The affected houses have been thoroughly disinfected and precautions taken to prevent the further spread of the disease.

The local Care Committee for Consumptives continues its most excellent work—providing nourishment and clothing in necessitous cases.

There were notified 16 cases of Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis, and 1 death was due to this cause.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Westhoughton Respiratory Death-rate.</i>	<i>County Urban Respiratory Death-rate.</i>	<i>Westhoughton Phthisis Death-rate.</i>	<i>County Urban Phthisis Death-rate.</i>
1916 ...	2·8	2·6	·51	1·06
1917 ...	2·9	2·6	·32	1·03
1918 ...	3·8	3·1	·52	1·1
1919 ...	2·5	2·6	·39	·81
1920 ...	2·2	...	·38	...

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

WATER SUPPLY.

The District is supplied with mainland upland water by the Bolton Corporation.

The total number of houses supplied with water is 3,083 ; the Bolton Corporation supplying the remainder in the Hulton Ward district.

The water was analysed during the year and found to be satisfactory.

The total consumption for the year was 101,965,000 gallons.

RIVERS & STREAMS.

There has been no pollution during the year.

DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

The District is served by eight sections of sewers, and the sewage is treated by chemicals and lime precipitation and irrigation.

The first section drains the whole of Daisy Hill and Leigh Road, and is delivered at Roger's Farm ; the second section drains Wearish Lane, Hart Common, Market Street, Church Street, Bolton Road, Park Road, Manchester Road, and part of Chorley Road. The sewage is delivered at Roger's Farm.

The sewage having first been mixed with lime is led into precipitating tanks, each with a capacity of 250,000 gallons. After precipitation the effluent is distributed by mechanical sprinklers on two circular filters.

The effluent is frequently taken for analysis by the Mersey and Irwell Water Board Inspector, and good results obtained.

The sewage from the third section is delivered at Dog Holes Farm (21 acres), and is led on the land and treated by irrigation alone.

The sewage from the fourth section (Hart Common and Marsh Brook) is delivered at Marsh Brook Farm (14 acres), and treated by irrigation.

The fifth section, draining part of Hulton Ward district, is connected with the sewer of the first section.

The sixth section, draining the New Brook Road portion of Hulton Ward, is delivered into the sewers of the Atherton Urban District Council, and treated by the Leigh and Atherton Joint Sewage Board at a yearly charge of ~~5/6~~ ^{2/} per house.

The seventh section drains the Dicconson Lane portion of North Ward, and is treated at a small works, comprising detritus and septic tanks and percolating filter.

The sewage system has worked well during the year.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

The question of privy conversion is now receiving the special attention of the Sanitary Committee, and the work after being in abeyance during war time is now steadily progressing.

The Council assists owners to the extent of half cost (~~not exceeding 75~~). During the year 45 privies were converted to the water system, and at the year end a number of notices had been served.

The Council proposes to engage the services of a Plumber, who shall devote the whole of his time to this work.

The following shows the accommodation in the district :—

No. of privy middens	...	...	...	...	...	2097
„ pail closets	...	...	...	...	...	2
„ dry ashpits (excluding middens)	...	...	...	...	...	294
„ portable receptacles for refuse	...	...	...	...	...	390
„ fresh-water closets	...	...	...	...	...	881
„ waste-water closets	...	...	...	...	...	117
„ privies converted during 1920	...	...	...	...	...	45

SCAVENGING.

Scavenging is now entirely carried out by the Council. The work has been satisfactorily performed, and is referred to in detail in the Inspector's report which is appended.

The pulverizer, which was bought by the Council some time ago, has not yet been utilised owing to the difficulty in completing the necessary plant.

FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

The quantity and wholesomeness of the milk supplied in the district has been satisfactory.

Forty-five samples of milk were taken and submitted for analysis during the year, with the following results: All the samples were satisfactory except one, which contained foreign ingredient. Proceedings were instituted, and the farmer was ordered to pay costs.

The farms have been frequently visited. Defects have been pointed out, many of which have been remedied, and others were under the consideration of the Committee at the end of the year.

MEAT.

Slaughter-houses have been regularly inspected and found generally satisfactory. A special inspection was carried out early in the year and a report thereon presented to the Sanitary Committee.

In several instances the walls and floors required repairs—not being in a condition thoroughly impervious to moisture. These renovations have since been carried out.

The question of provision of Public Abattoir was considered consequent on the above report, but it was the feeling of the Committee that the time was inopportune.

42 lbs. of dates have been condemned and destroyed as unfit for food, under Section 117, Public Health Act, 1875.

There were no carcasses, or parts of carcasses, condemned for Tuberculosis.

The following is a list showing the number of slaughter-houses in use in the district at the dates mentioned:—

In 1914	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
In January, 1920	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
In December, 1920	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12

Frequent visits have been paid to bakehouses and other premises where foods are manufactured or stored or exposed for sale, and apart from minor defects the reports were satisfactory.

SCHOOLS.

The schools have been frequently visited, and in most instances the sanitary condition has been satisfactory.

The closet accommodation is satisfactory, except in two instances. Negotiations are proceeding for the conversion of these, which are of the pail type.

HOUSING.

1. GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS.—The total number of houses in Westhoughton is 3,313, of which 2,730 are available for working classes.

The estimated population is 15,781, and there is still a pressing need for more houses. Contracts are placed for the provision of 250, and the work is proceeding satisfactorily.

2. OVERCROWDING.—The number of houses with more than two occupants for one bedroom is 396. The number of houses intended for one family which are now occupied (without alterations) by two or more families is 230. It is hoped that this state of affairs will be remedied by the provision of more houses.

3. THE GENERAL STANDARD of houses in the district is fair. Many defects exist, and in the majority of cases neglect during war-time is the apparent reason. Action has been taken as far as possible under the Public Health and Housing Acts. Difficulties in remedying unfitness have been mainly due to the inability to secure labour owing to the concentration of effort on the provision of new houses.

4. UNHEALTHY AREAS.—Representations were made to the Authority regarding one small area, viz.: Dickinson's Yard; and the Council have under consideration a scheme for its replacement.

5. BYE-LAWS are required and being sought regarding tents, vans, etc. This has been rendered necessary owing to the use of the Old Market Square as a public market place.

APPENDICES.

The appendices summarise the details concerning the year :—

I.—GENERAL.

(1) Estimated population	15,781
(2) General death-rate	11.1
(3) Death-rate from Tuberculosis	0.38
(4) Infantile mortality	91
(5) No. of dwelling-houses of all classes ..	3,313
(6) No. of working-class dwelling-houses...	2,730
(7) No. of new working-class houses None erected	completed

2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

I.—*Inspection.*

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	63
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	81
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	18
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	20

II.—*Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notice.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	19
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III.—Action under Statutory Powers.

A.—Proceedings under Section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919 :—

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	None
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit : (a) by owners, (b) by Local Authority in default of owners	None
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	None

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	13
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied :	
(a) by owners	9
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	None

C.—Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909 :—

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	18
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	18
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	None
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	1
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	1

3.—UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Areas represented to the Local Authority with a view to Improvement Schemes under (a) Part I., or (b) Part II., of the Act of 1890 :—

(1) Name of area	... .. Dickinson's Yard
(2) Acreage	... .. 1·92
(3) No. of working-class houses in area	... 46
(4) No. of working-class persons to be displaced	... .. 200

4.—Number of houses not complying with the building bye-laws erected with consent of Local Authority under Section 25 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919 None
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5.—Staff engaged on housing work, with briefly, the duties of each officer :—One Housing Inspector appointed under the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909, who is also Sanitary Inspector. The Surveyor is in charge of the Housing Scheme.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

WILLIAM H. LEIGH.

June, 1921.

Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Westhoughton
Urban District Council.*



GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit to you my ANNUAL REPORT of the various sanitary duties performed and improvements carried out during the year 1920 ; and also furnish the following Statement, in accordance with the Sanitary Officers' Order of December, 1910 :—

(a) The number and nature of the inspections made during the year :

Visits to houses where infectious cases have occurred	68
Visits made to the opening up of blocked drains, the repairing and re-laying of same ; including visits to blocked water closets, and supervising laying of drains for conversions	394
Visits to farms, under the Dairies and Cow-sheds Order	98
Visits to bakehouses and workshops, under the Factory Act	65
Visits to slaughter-houses	52
No. of milk samples taken, including comparative samples	46
No. of houses inspected, under the Housing and Town Planning Act	63
No. of certificates issued, under the Increase of Rent Act	8

(b) The number of notices served during the year, distinguishing Statutory from Informal notices :

Statutory notices to abate nuisances and to convert	58
Letters and preliminary notices	49
Closing Orders	18

I have been called to examine the carcasses of 10 beasts and 3 pigs, which have had to be slaughtered on the advice of a Veterinary Surgeon or through accident, and found all fit for food.

42 lbs. of dates have been condemned and destroyed as unfit for food.

Forty-six samples of milk were taken during the year, including comparative and informal samples ; also one sample of flour. Of the milk samples two were deficient in milk fat, but not sufficient to warrant prosecutions ; the vendors were warned. One sample contained eight parts by volume of cudung per 100,000 ; this farmer was prosecuted and a conviction obtained. The sample of flour was certified as genuine.

The conversion of privy middens to water closets was again commenced during the latter half of the year. There were 45 privies converted during that period. This would appear slow progress, but is accounted for by having in many cases to extend the sewers, to the alteration of the existing buildings, and to the difficulty in always obtaining the services of the local plumbers ; this latter difficulty has now been overcome by the Council appointing their own plumber to undertake this work, and providing the necessary flushing tanks, pedestals, etc. It is hoped that better progress will now be made with the work.

The removal of house refuse is now mainly carried out by motors. Two Vulcan 30 cwts. tipping wagons are employed for the removal of privy midden refuse, and one 1 ton Ford tipping wagon for the removal of bin refuse ; two carts are also generally employed for special work.

The Vulcan wagons have proved very satisfactory, being more economical than carts, especially on long-distance work. The Ford wagon was only delivered in December, so that it is not yet possible to make a comparison.

The inspection of houses, under the Housing Acts, has been carried out during the year. The principal defects being dampness and want of cleansing and limewashing. As little or nothing was carried out in this direction during the war, there are large arrears of this class of sanitary improvement yet to be dealt with, but with the high cost of materials and labour this work is consequently delayed.

There was one house demolished during the year.

The foregoing does not represent all the improvements carried out or the work performed ; much has been done by interviews, and without the necessity of serving statutory notices. The daily visits to the cleansing staff is not tabulated, nor the amount of time involved in office work and preparing reports, etc., or the supervision and giving of levels, etc., for drainage work in connection with closet conversions.

I beg to acknowledge the whole-hearted support of the Council in all sanitary improvements and their desire to carry out as far as is practicable and possible all that tends for the health and well being of the community.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

F. J. A. GREEN,

A.M.I.S.E., A.R.SAN.I.,

Sanitary Inspector & Cleansing Superintendent.

March, 1921.